



*No office*  
*disturbance*  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**INFORMATION SERVICE**

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For Release SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 1956

**SECRETARY MCKAY TO PRESENT CONSERVATION AWARD TO BOY SCOUTS**

Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay will present the Department's Conservation Service Award to the Boy Scouts of America during the annual pot luck supper of the National Capital Area Scout Council at the National Guard Armory next Saturday evening, February 4.

The award citation will be presented by Secretary McKay to Dr. Arthur A. Schuck, Chief Scout Executive, who will be the principal speaker of the evening.

An adjunct of the Department of the Interior incentive awards program, the Conservation Service Award was established to give honorary recognition to organizations, groups or individuals not eligible to receive Department honor awards under the regular program. It is granted to groups or individuals who perform outstanding and direct service to the Department in the field of conservation, of a type and quality that would serve as a basis for a Distinguished Service Award if performed by an employee of the Department.

Fifty Conservation Service Awards have been approved by the Department's incentive awards committee since it was established in 1951, including the one to be presented to the Boy Scouts.

Presentation of the award to the Boy Scouts of America is in recognition of that organization's "National Conservation Good Turn" program carried out during 1954. The program was suggested by President Eisenhower--who is honorary President of the Boy Scouts and a member of the National Executive Board of the organization--in a letter to Dr. Schuck in June of 1953.

As a part of this program, the Boy Scouts carried on a total of 41,721 different projects in soil and water conservation; 38,125 projects in forestry; 29,323 projects in fish and wildlife conservation; and 30,450 activities "designed to keep America beautiful by eliminating litter along roadways, parks, rivers and streams."

In an effort to arouse public recognition of the need for natural resource conservation, the Scouts built 40,940 public exhibits and demonstrations, gave 56,678 talks on conservation at public gatherings, and distributed more than three million conservation posters.

In addition, the Boy Scouts emphasized conservation within their organization, establishing certain merit badge requirements and widening their nature study program to embrace conservation in broader scope.

Last summer, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture jointly sponsored a four-State tour for Boy Scout National Conservation Achievement Award winners from the 12 Boy Scout regions. This tour afforded the boys a closer look at national conservation practices in Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Wyoming. The two sponsoring Departments received cooperation in arranging the tour from the Department of Defense and national headquarters of the Boy Scouts of America.

Throughout the "National Conservation Good Turn" program, the Scouts were assisted by various Federal agencies, principally those in Interior and Agriculture. Field personnel of the several agencies were alerted to lend all possible help to the boys in selecting worthwhile projects and in carrying them out.

Recognition of this Federal assistance was given in the Scouts' report to the President on the program, in which they said:

"We should like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the personnel of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior who have done so much to help us in program planning, program promotion, and in actual program operation. Virtually every one of the 540 Scout councils in their reports to us listed two or more Federal agency representatives as their sources of local help."

Interior Department agencies helping with the program included the National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, Geological Survey, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Mines, and Bureau of Land Management. In the Department of Agriculture, the principal agencies involved were the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, and Extension Service.

x x x